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The Review of Religions

Editor—A. Q. Niaz, B.A.

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نحمدہٗ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

THE KA'BA, ABRAHAM AND ISHMAEL

Antiquity of the Ka'ba

The Holy Quran and the authentic traditions favour the view that some sort of structure did exist prior to the raising of 'the foundations of the House.' It is called 'the first House' built for the worship of God (3 : 97); and Abraham, in his prayer uttered at the time of his separation from his child, says: "I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivable valley *near Thy sacred House*" (14 : 38). The Quran also calls it "the Ancient House" (22 : 30, 34). Describing the return of Abraham, after leaving Hagar and Ishmael at the place where Mecca now stands, the Holy Prophet says that "he turned his face towards the Ka'ba, extended his hands, and uttered" the above mentioned prayer. (*Bukhari*, Kitab Bad'ul Khalq). It shows clearly that the Ka'ba was in existence at that time. So it appears that Abraham and Ishmael only rebuilt it at some later date.

A Jewish tradition also says that Abraham built the "altar which Adam had built, which had been destroyed by the waters of the deluge, which Noah had again builded and which had been destroyed in the age of divisions" (The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel, translated by J. W. Etheridge, London, 1862 p. 226). Ka'ba is the only altar which answers this description; there is no other place so ancient.

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Herodotus (484-425 B.C.) says that the Persians 'learnt from the Arabs' to sacrifice to 'Alitta' (Book I: 131). In another place he says: "The Arabs..... acknowledge no other gods than.....Urotal and Alilat" (Book III: 8). Alitta and Alilat are the names of the same idol which was worshipped in Mecca as *al-Lat*. Diodorus of Sicily (60. B.C.) speaking of the region now known as Hedjaz says that it was "especially honoured by the natives" and adds, "It is called the Palm-grove and contains a multitude of trees of this kind . . . But all the country round about is lacking in springs of water and is fiery hot..... Moreover, an altar is there built of hard stone and very old in years, bearing an inscription in ancient letters of an unknown tongue. The oversight of the sacred precinct is in the care of a man and a woman who hold the sacred office for life....In the above mentioned palm grove a festival was celebrated every four years, to which the neighbouring peoples thronged from all sides, both to sacrifice to the gods of the sacred precinct hecatombs of well-fed camels and also to carry back to their native lands some of the water of the place" (Translation by C. H. Oldfather, London, 1935, Book III, Chap., 42, Vol. II, pp. 211-213). Strabo (63 B.C.,—21 A.D.) also speaks of it. (His Geography, translated by H. L. Jones, Vol. VII, London, 1930, p. 341). Muir and Sale are also forced to admit that the Ka'ba was in "singular veneration with the Arabs from great antiquity" (Prel. Discourse, Sec. IV; *Life of Mahomet*. London, XIV).

Abraham and the Ka'ba

The association of Abraham with the Ka'ba is not a fiction as supposed by W. R. Smith (*Ency. Brit.*) nor is it an invention of Islam as imagined by Sprenger and Snouck. Even Th. Noldeke says that the black stone in the Ka'ba is "an object of ancient veneration; and that in the view that these holy things were established by Abraham the Holy Prophet "was but following some Meccan predecessor whom Jews or Christians had told about Abraham and Ishmael"

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(*Sketches from Eastern History*, translated by J. S. Black, London, 1892, p. 67). Renan states that the Abraham of Genesis is the type of an Arab Sheikh. C. J. Ellicott, Lord Bishop of Gloucester, says, "His life and surroundings subsequently are those of an Arab Sheikh" (Vol. I. p. 71). A. P. Stanley, Dean of Westminster, also supports the same view (*History of the Jewish Church*, London, 1883, p. 9). P. K. Hitti, in his History says: "ram in Abram, the father of the Hebrew nation, is Arabic 'desire'" (p. 40). So there is nothing impossible in Hagar and Ishmael coming to the place where Mecca is now situated. It is by no means a modern town. The *Encyclopædia Biblica* even says that Mecca has been a great centre of trade "from remote antiquity" (Col. 5161). The distance between Canaan aud Mecca is also not too great to preclude this possibility, in view of the ancient trade routes that connected distant countries.

Prof. C. C. Torrey says: "The Arabs were Ishmaelites, according to the Hebrew tradition. God said to Abraham (Gen. 17, 20): 'As for Ishmael, I have heard thee; behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.' The twelve princes, subsequently named (25, 13ff.), represent Arabian tribes or districts; notice especially Kedar, Duma (Dumat al-Jandal) Teima. The 'great nation' is the people of Arabia. Ishmael was circumcised (17, 26), was with his father at the time of his death, and assisted Isaac in burying him (25, 9). The Arabs were rightful heirs of the religion of their father Abraham, though they chose paganism instead" (*Jewish Foundation of Islam*, p. 83). The same author says, in the next page, that the Jerusalem Targum also speaks "of the visits of the 'very old man' Abraham to the tent of his nomad son, far away in the Arabian desert." It is also 'alluded to in the Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer.' Prof. Torrey is definitely of "the opinion that the association of Abraham and Ishmael with the sanctuary at Mekka is pre-Islamic" (p. 91).

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The Wilderness of Paran

The Bible says that Ishmael "dwelt in the wilderness of Paran" (Gen. 21 : 21). Intensive efforts have been made by Christian missionaries and scholars to locate Paran. J. Skinner, in his *International Critical Commentary* on Genesis 14 : 6 says that it is "the desolate plateau of et-Tih stretching from the Arabah to the isthmus of Suez" (p. 262). The chief Rabbi says El-Paran is "probably the part at the Northern extremity of the Gulf of Akaba, Red Sea; the wilderness is the bare plateau of limestone between Canaan and Egypt." But the greatest English commentator of the Old Testament, who devoted the whole of his life to the study of the Bible, Dr. S. R. Driver, Professor of Oxford, has had to confess after all that "The site of Paran, from which this wilderness derives its name, is, however, unknown; the Wady Feiran, near Jebel Serbal, which has been suggested, seems to be too much secluded by intervening mountains from the great plateau itself to have given it its name" (Deut. p. 4). J. L. Burckhardt also is against Feiran. He says: "Makrizi is certainly right in supposing that the Faran or Paran mentioned in the Scriptures is not the same as Feiran; an opinion which has been entertained also by Niebuhr and other travellers" (*Travels in Syria and the Holy Land*, London, 1832, page 618).

This confusion of the Biblical scholars is caused by the fact that the word 'Paran' occurs in the Bible in more places than one (Gen. 14 : 6; Gen. 21 : 21; Num. 10 : 12; Num. 12 : 16; Num. 13 : 3, 26; 1 Sam. 25 : 1; Deut. 33 : 2; 1 Kings 11 : 18; Hab. 3 : 3); and effort is made to find a place that should fit in with all these passages. The only way in which this muddle can be removed, if it is at all possible to do so, is by treating the oldest geographical references first; and then the subsequent references might be solved by supposing that the same name was borrowed and applied primarily or figuratively to other places also. Hence all that is necessary here is to concentrate our attention on the Paran of Abraham's time which seems

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to be the oldest reference.

We are told that the generations of Ishmael "dwelt from Havilah unto Shur" (Gen. 25 : 18). The natural assumption would be that the wilderness of Paran must be between Havilah and Shur, which phrase, according to the *Biblical Cyclopædia* of J. Eadie (London, 1862, p. 295), designates "the opposite extremes of Arabia." In the Biblical Atlas published by the R. T. S. (London, 1920), Shur is shown south of Jerusalem and Havilah near Yemen ; while in others Havilah is generally shown towards the Persian Gulf. The *Encyclopædia Biblica* says that "Shur or Asshur is a region south of Palestine and adjoining Misrim or Musri . . . . . The Ishmaelites dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur that is in front of Misrim (to the entrance of Asshur)," (col. 4498). A reference to the map given between columns 4844 and 4845 will show that the wilderness of Paran located by Christians in the Sinai Peninsula is excluded from this description. So we should look for it elsewhere. Now geographers and travellers mention a Faran within these limits. Jerome speaks of Pharan as 'the desert of the Saracens' (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, col. 3584). Makrizi, whom Burckhardt quotes and calls 'the excellent historian and describer of Egypt,' says : 'It is said that Faran is the name of the mountains of Mekka' (*Travels in Syria and the Holy Land*, page 617). Jacut's Geographisches Worterbuch (F. Wustenfeld, Leipzig, 1862, volume III, page 834) says that Faran is a name of Mecca, and that it is also applied to the mountains of Mecca. Even if one asks 'the babes and sucklings' of that neighbourhood, they will speak of the beautiful flowers that grow in the *bariyyai Faran* (Fasl-ul-Khitab, Qadian, volume II, 1924, page 37). The word *faran* seems to be the Arabic Fārr ān. It means 'two refugees'. It appears that the place took its name from Hagar and Ishmael who came there as refugees. Unacquainted with Arabic, Western writers have not been able to find the real derivation of this word. Anyhow, the fact that 'a great nation'—the Arabs who had an empire

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which was greater than that of Rome at its zenith—is actually and intimately associated with this Faran of the Hedjaz is a sure and definite indication of the truth that it is the same wilderness where Ishmael dwelt (Gen. 18: 20). Dr. A. Benisch calls it in his translation of the Pentateuch 'the desert of Paran'.

The Arabs are Ishmaelites

The Arabs claim their descent from Ishmael. Even fanatic Christian authorities have had to admit "that the Arabs, from physical characteristics, language, the occurrence of native traditions . . . . . and the testimony of the Bible are mainly and essentially Ismaelitish" (*Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, by J. M. M'Clintock and J. Strong, New York, 1877, page 685). Ellicott, commenting upon Gal. 4: 25, says that Arabia is "the country of Hagar. The scene of the Mosaic legislation was part of the domains of the Ishmaelites" (page 468). Josephus calls Ismael the founder of the Arabians; and says that the 12 sons of Ismael "inhabited all the country from Euphrates to the Red Sea" (*Antiquities*, page 48). This is supported, in the 4th century, by the independent testimony of St. Jerome who was himself long resident on the confines of Arabia. In his commentary on Is. LX. 7, he identifies with the Ishmaelites, as an extant and well-known race, the two great Arab tribes. He says "Kedar is a country of the Saracens, who, in Scripture, are called Ishmaelites; and Nabaioth, is one of the sons of Ishmael, after whose names the desert is called, which, though barren of vegetable produce, abounds in cattle." Rev. C. Forster says: "We have thus a clear and full concurrence of scriptural, heathen, Jewish, and Christian testimonies to the historical fact, that the great northern desert of Arabia . . . . . was colonised by the 12 tribes descending from the sons of Ishmael (*The Historical Geography of Arabia*, London, 1845, page 211; see also Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, volume II, pages 558, 559). Forster then locates the Kedar in Hedjaz and identifies them with the Koraish. He says:

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"Thus, for the Kedar of the O. T., we meet in Pliny, the Cedrei, Cedareni, or Gedranitæ, as an Arab tribe or people extant in his day. . . . . Uranius, cited by Stephanus of Byzantium, makes mention of the Kerdanitæ or Kedranitæ (manifestly the same people with the Gedranitæ of Pliny) . . . . . Ptolemy places the Darræ (an abridgement only of Kedarræ . . . . . .) on the very sight assigned by Pliny to the Cedrei . . . . . By consent of the ancients the seats of this people have been already fixed in Hedjaz . . . . . it was the immemorial tradition of the Arabs themselves, that Kedar and his posterity originally settled in Hedjaz. From this patriarch, the tribe of Koreish in particular, the sovereigns of Mekka and guardians of the Caaba, always boasted their descent. . . . . Mekka, correctly pronounced by the learned to be the Macoraba of Ptolemy, has, from times immemorial, been the Metropolis of the Harb nation" (Pages 244—265).

The Holy Prophet belonged to the tribe of Koraish and was thus a descendant of Abraham through Ishmael.

Some Christians question the truth of Abraham's and Ishmael's connection with the Ka'ba on the flimsy ground that the Bible is silent about it. But it cannot be denied that the story of Abraham's leaving Hagar and Ishmael in a wilderness, where the providential appearance of a well is also stated, is mentioned in the Bible (Gen. 21 : 14-19). It was only natural, in these circumstances, that the children of Sarah should inherit a hatred for Ishmael and his family. It is therefore idle to search for a full and unadulterated account of Ishmael in the Bible, which has been subjected to human interference for a long time. But that is certainly no reason to reject the ancient and universal traditions of the Ishmaelites, especially when the Israelite traditions are accepted as true on their own authority. Even before the advent of the Holy Prophet, the Quraish believed and declared themselves with a singular unanimity to be the descendants of Ishmael, and their claim was recognised throughout the length and breadth of Arabia. They

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had even an idol of Ishmael set up in the Ka'ba. He was after all not a great King so as to be idolised in this manner. If the Quraish are not the true descendants of Ishmael, who and where are those descendants? They could have easily exposed the Quraish, but no such voice has ever been raised from any quarter. Hence the Arab tradition in itself is a conclusive proof of the association of Abraham with the Ka'ba. J. Duns says that Ishmael "is looked to as the progenitor of Mahomet and is regarded by the Arabs as having been the eldest son and heir of Abraham" (*Biblical Natural Science*, London, vol. I., p. 397). And the Quran confirms the local tradition about the building of the Ka'ba. There is no reason whatsoever, except religious prejudice on the part of Jews and Christians, to disbelieve the most reliable and authentic accounts of ancient history handed down from remote antiquity by the Arab progenitors to their posterity. After all the Arabs have not been an uncivilised people. Their independence is a fact of history. Their empire was greater than that of Rome at its zenith. In science and culture even Europe owes a good deal to this great nation. "The Arabic-speaking peoples," says P. K. Hitti, "were the main bearers of the torch of culture and civilisation throughout the world" for no less than five centuries. "They were the medium through which ancient science and philosophy were recovered, supplemented and transmitted in such a way as to make possible the renaissance of Western Europe" (p. 557). The wonderful and almost unique memory of the Arabs is still acknowledged and admired. The only Scripture preserved in its original purity throughout the world is the Quran, and it has been the privilege of the Arabs to be its custodians for several centuries. Even the enemies of Islam admit it. Why then should the unanimous tradition of such a distinguished nation be brushed aside as worthless by people who are themselves ignorant and know very little of the history of Arabia, especially when there exists ample external evidence to prove the ancient association of Abraham with Arabia?

That the Hebrew tradition supports the Ishmaelitic

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origin of the Arabs has been indicated already. Not only did Abraham take Hagar and Ishmael to the wilderness of Paran, but the Talmud tells us that he visited them afterwards also. It says: "And it came to pass after many years that Abraham, yielding to a longing which had always possessed him, determined to visit his son, and informing Sarah of his intention he started off alone upon a camel. He reached Ishmael's dwelling-place about noontime, and found that his son was away from home, hunting. He was rudely treated by Ishmael's wife, who did not know him, and who refused him the bread and water which he asked for. Therefore, he said to her, when thy husband returns, say thus to him, describing my appearance, 'An old man from the land of the Philistines came to our door during thy absence, and he said to me, when thy husband returns, tell him to remove the nail which he has driven in his tent and to replace it with one more worthy,' with which words Abraham rode away. When Ishmael returned home, his wife related to him the occurrence, describing the man and repeating his words, and Ishmael knew that his father had visited him and been treated with disrespect. For which cause Ishmael divorced his wife, and married a maiden from the land of Canaan. Some three years after this Abraham again visited his son's tent" (Selections translated by H. Polano, London, Tamuz 5636, p. 51). It was a habit with Abraham to build an altar wherever he went; so he must have built an altar in the wilderness of Paran and that is the Ka'ba.

Ishmael and the Everlasting Covenant

The Holy Quran includes Ishmael's name among the prophets. It is clear even from the Bible that he is equally blessed with Isaac. Moreover, Abraham prayed for him in the following words: "O that Ishmael might live before Thee." (Gen. 17 : 18). The words 'before Thee' clearly indicate that Abraham entreated God to grant Ishmael a godly life and admit him into His Kingdom, elevating him to the dignity of

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a prophet. Robinson says, in his Hebrew Lexicon, that the Hebrew word means to be under one's eye and become one's favourite (1836, pp. 533, 830, 831). In the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel the words of the prayer are: (*a*) "O that Yishmael may be established before Thee" (p. 67). (*b*) "May not Ishmael be established and serve before Thee?" (p. 208). The Chief Rabbi interprets the words "live before Thee" as "live under the Divine care and blessing." In answer to this prayer God says to Abraham: "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee" (Gen. 17 : 20).

In spite of the above the Jews and the Christians say that religious pre-eminence was promised only for Isaac. The reason given is Gen. 17 : 21, which says "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." It should, however, be remembered in this connection that the original covenant was really made between Abraham and God before the birth of Isaac. God says: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee" (Gen. 17 : 7). Circumcision was then fixed as the token of the covenant, according to which Ishmael was also circumcised, because he was the seed of Abraham.....The context shows that verse 21 sounds very odd, and it appears that there has been some interpolation. The verses read thus: "thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him.....And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold I have blessed him.....But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." The last phrase is very peculiar. In the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan the words are (*a*) "But my covenant I will establish with Ishaq, whom Sarah shall bear to thee, at this time, in the year following" (p. 67). (*b*) "But my covenant will I establish with Ishaq, whom Sarah shall bear to thee at this time in the year after" (p. 209). Dr. A.

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Benisch, in his Pentateuch published in 1882, gives the word 'raise' as an alternative of 'establish,' and 'other year' as an alternative of 'next year' in this verse. It should be noted that the word 'set' is missing in the Targums and in one of them the auxiliary 'will' follows 'I' and the phrase 'at this time' is separated with commas. Therefore, if the phrase 'at this time' is placed in the beginning, the whole sentence can fit in nicely with the context as well as with actual history. It should read thus: "But my covenant, at this time, I will establish with Ishaq, whom Sarah shall bear to thee in the year following," *i.e.*, the covenant will begin with Isaac, as it actually did.

That Ishmael was included in the covenant to inherit the blessings of God is clear from the fact that he was circumcised (Gen. 17 : 25), and the promises given to him are the same as given to Isaac (Gen. 17 : 20). That he was the seed of Abraham cannot be denied; because his mother, Hagar, was the lawful wife of Abraham (Gen. 16 : 3). C. J. Ellicott, Lord Bishop of Gloucester, says in his Commentary: "Hagar.. ...was to be, not Abraham's concubine, but his wife" (Vol. I. p. 69). The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel tell us that "Sara said to Abram, behold, now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing, go to my handmaid and set her free; .....And Abram hearkened to the word of Sara. And Sara.....took Hagar..... and set her free, and gave her to Abram her husband to wife" (Translation by J. W. Etheridge, London, 1862, p. 205). This setting free of the handmaid or "bondwoman" does not imply that Hagar was a barbarian slave. Sir Leonard Woolley says that she was a "civilised creature, sprung from the second great centre of culture in the ancient world" (*Abraham*, London, 1936, p. 144). "According to Midrash," says another authority, "Hagar had been given as a slave to Abraham by her father, the Pharaoh of Egypt, who said, 'My daughter had better be a slave in the house of Abram, than mistress in any other'" (Translation of the Targums by

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J. W. Etheridge, note 8, on page 204). She herself was comforted by God directly in these words: "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude" (Gen. 16 : 10)

Seen in the light of history and judged by the actual manner in which God has treated the Israelites and the Ishmaelites it is proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that it is the descendants of Ishmael that have become the inheritors of the 'everlasting' covenant. It is through them, and through them only, that "all families of the earth" and "all the nations of the earth" have been blessed (Gen. 12 : 3; Gen. 22 : 18). Moses and all the Israelitish prophets including Jesus came only to serve Israel. But Muhammad (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) and Muhammad alone is the one who proclaimed abroad: "O mankind, truly I am the Messenger of Allah to you all" (7 : 159). He is the one who is a mercy unto all the worlds (21 : 108).

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THE EFFECT OF HINDU RELIGION ON POLITICAL BALANCE IN INDIA

Translated from *The Al-Fazl.*—This article is a convincing answer to the Hindu propaganda, the dangers of which we pointed out in our March issue, while reviewing a book entitled *The Problem of Minorities*, Unwin, London. —*Editor.*

What is Political Balance

In statecraft, in order to hold the balance firmly in one's own hand, it is a common practice to weaken certain countries or nations and to strengthen others. In the manœuvres necessary to achieve this object fine scruples for right and justice practically go by the board, the guiding principle in the policy being the individual interest always of a particular group or nation. This is called political balance.

The Hindu Claim

Throughout the world this subtle device in the art of government is generally restored to by those who control the destinies of nations, and they exploit the lever to the fullest extent. The roots of this policy, however, are always embedded in some injustice and its operation leads to nothing but tyranny. The evil is universal, but in this brief article I desire to confine my remarks only to the destruction it has caused in India from the beginning of history, and to the baffling chaos we find it has finally landed us in now; and my aim is to combat and refute the Hindu view that the situation in India admits of no solution because the British, to safeguard their own interests, are showing undue favour to the Muslims, while they treat the Hindus with injustice and a heavy hand; that the Muslims are being used as a counterpoise to keep the Hindus in check; that efforts are continually being made to perpetuate the cleavage between them; and that

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this is the main obstacle on the road to India's freedom. This view implies that responsibility for the present dead lock in India lies on the shoulders of the British people and the Indian Muslims—in other words upon Muslim meanness, really, for they lend themselves to be exploited in this manner. According to this view the rulers are after all foreigners and they cannot be expected to keep awake of nights on account of moral scruples where their own interest and the good of India come into conflict.

Of course this sort of argument, on the surface, is plausible enough; and it appeals to the uncritical patriotic fervour so common in India to-day. But really it is only a convenient way of throwing the blame on others which of right should lie at the door of Hinduism as a religion and system of social values. It is about time that we realised that the evil from which India suffers goes far deeper: that the disease which weakened India and enabled the British to obtain a hold on the country is a disease which lies in the heart of certain basic conceptions of Hindu society and religion, namely, a sectional and narrow conception of self-interest combined with a deplorable weakness of character that sacrifices the larger interests of the country for personal or sectional gain. This disease had eaten out the vitals of India long before the Muslims or the British ever set foot in the country. Are we then to understand that at the magic touch of Gandhi's fingers the terrible germs of this disease, nearly four thousand years old, have at once left the system and melted into the air, leaving the responsibility for the pitiable decay of the Present on the shoulders of the British and the Muslims?

Significance of Indian History

For a clear perspective of the situation confronting us to-day, and for a clear answer to the question: "Who is responsible?" one cannot dispense with a reference to Indian history and Indian civilisation. When did the idea of political balance take birth in

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India and by whom was it fathered? Next, after this idea began to decide all major policies of state, which of the two peoples, the Hindus or the Muslims, have benefited by it the most?

The answer to these important questions is only too clearly written in the pages of Indian History. Before the Aryans entered India, it was a well populated civilized country, inhabited by civilized and prosperous races. Remains of big cities of this period are to be met all over India. As the country was situated on the central belt of the globe, its culture was not of an isolated or individual type; rather, it had in it elements of the international. It is a well established fact that India at that early age had contact with China, Java and Sumatra, etc. But, as happened in the history of many other peoples, the Indians at that time did not organise themselves into big imperial states. Their system of government was of the early Greek and Babylonian types—small city states, and local chiefs holding sway over small territories. Though they were one in civilization and culture, there was between these states no political cohesion, or co-operation on a countrywide scale.

Aryan Invasion

At this stage India was invaded by a semi-religious race from the north which, as it rolled over the country, turned everything upside down. The invaders being small in number as compared to the mass of the people they had managed to subjugate, they naturally gave serious thought to the problem of maintaining their hold upon the country and preventing its sons from rising to their feet at some future date to drive the invaders back from their soil. This contingency, fearful to contemplate, had to be well guarded against. Having come to this conclusion, the rulers began systematically to weaken the vast mass of the common people. Rules and regulations were devised to debar husbandmen, traders, artisans, labourers and the social slaves (the Sudras)

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from wearing arms. These classes were also forbidden to indulge in cultural or learned pursuits. In fact they were not permitted to acquire any learning at all ; and least of all had they any concern with religion or statecraft. Thus, early in her history, the sons of Mother India were torn into sections and the foundation laid of the terrible political weakness from which we continue to suffer—to-day more than ever.

One often hears that the Sudras are the feet and legs on which the Hindu community stands. If that is so, all that need be said is that these unfortunate feet, instead of being nursed and strengthened, have been so terribly weakened that India is now a hopeless cripple, unable to stand, and much less able to walk with head up in the air as other men do. It can only limp and drag itself painfully along—stumbling and falling and hurting itself more, perhaps, than could be recompensed by the progress it makes. In their anxiety to safeguard their own position the Aryan ruling classes so far weakened the rest of the country that an incalculable amount of energy, from year to year and from century to century, was *lost to national aims*. At last the weakness became so great, so deep and so palpable that the country practically, *and literally*, courted invasion. The ancestors of a number of tribes now known as Rajputs descended into India at various times and founded strong principalities; but as their religious and cultural traditions were neither very strong nor very definite, they were gradually absorbed by Hinduism. They became part and parcel of the Hindu oligarchy but the masses continued to be the target of class tyranny, and everything went on much the same as before till the Raja of Kannauj, to hasten the downfall of his rival of Delhi, invited Shahab-ud-Din Ghauri to come and take possession.

Muslim Era

This brings us to the era of Muslim conquest in India. These invaders did not belong to any one single race. There were Arabs among them, and Iranians and

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Afghans—racially different, and belonging to different stratas of society, but all welded into one harmonious whole. In religion, in culture and civilization, in modes of thought and action, they were at one: they practically spoke the same language. The Brotherhood of Man was a grand conception with them, but it was much more than a conception—it was also a fact of daily life. In their rights as human beings even their slaves were their equals. Their conception of self-interest, therefore, was not exclusive, nor class-ridden and narrow. Muslim culture gave to India a dynasty of Slave Emperors and to the historical land of the Nile it gave the brilliant rule of the Mumlukes. Among the Muslims (and this fact must have seemed very strange to the Hindus divided into four *varans*) even holders of the Imperial Purple gave their daughters in marriage and their crowns sometimes to their slaves, should these prove worthy of the honour and the position. The door of opportunity, barred and closely guarded in every other society, then and even to-day, stood wide open among them in the face of all, for this was what the Muslims were taught by Islam and the personal example set by its founder. Evidently, whereas the social and political order in force in India breeded cowardice and despair and selfishness in the heart of the ordinary citizen, Islam created love and self-sacrifice and courage and a steadfast loyalty. It is no wonder, therefore, that the clash of these two civilizations ended as it did: it could not have ended otherwise. Islam conquered not only Indian territories but also the hearts of the people and spread over the country from one corner to the other. Just as born slaves rose to wear the imperial crowns and to wield royal sceptres, the toiling common masses too were given their opportunity by Islam. Converts of Indian blood, even those who held firm to Hinduism but accepted the authority of Law and Order, rose to be famous generals and administrators in the Indian Muslim Empire. The succession of kings and emperors which preceded the Mogul Empire comprised practically all the racial elements which formed the body-politic of the Muslim people; and if history calls them by one common

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name, *i.e.*, the "Aghan Kings", it does so only as a matter of convenience. In fact there were rulers among them of Arab blood and Iranians, Turks and Pathans—even Abyssinians. Their eyes opened by this unique social and political philosophy and this unique system of spiritual values, thousands upon thousands of Indians hastened to embrace Islam, not out of fear, as a matter of political expediency, but because they were attracted by the sublime truth embodied in the Muslim conception of the Unity of God and the consequent Universal Brotherhood of man. Herein lay the appeal of Islam which those could not resist to whom their masters had for countless centuries denied all opportunity. They flocked to the Muslim standards and enrolled in its armies or served it eagerly in other walks of life. The charm of Islam was so irresistible that instances are not unknown of whole armies, sent into the field to fight against it, having gone bodily over to tender allegiance to this uplifting Faith, leaving those who had sent them to take to the jungles to save themselves.

Mogul Empire

After this the Moguls came to India and established themselves at Delhi. The Moguls, it has to be remembered, received Islam at third hand. In addition to their remoteness from the time of the Holy Prophet, their homeland was far removed from Arabia, the fountain-head of this light. Moreover, the Moguls embraced Islam when the inner spirit of the religion had begun to weaken in its hold upon the people even in the centre of the Muslim World. For these reasons Islam did not go as deep in the case of the Moguls as it had done in the case of their predecessors, the Pathans. The Moguls were more influenced by considerations of state policy. In order to hold the Pathans (*i.e.*, the Non-Mogul Muslims) in check they copied Hindu methods and took to using one section of the population as a counterpoise against the other. The successful rebellion of Sher Shah Suri, who came within an ace of ending the Mogul Empire in India, gave to this policy

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of counterpoise the force of urgent necessity; and the Emperor Akbar was its greatest votary whose slow and silent policy made it possible for the Hindus to regain their lost courage and influence.

Consequences of Akbar's Policy

Mogul Emperors, to the last, remained satisfied that the only threat to their power lay in those Muslims whom they had dispossessed when they came to India, or in those of their own nobles or captains who might gain too much influence and proceed to make themselves independent. Therefore the policy evolved by Akbar was continued by his successors so that purely Muslim provinces like Kabul had Hindu Rajput governors, while Hindu ministers found themselves in charge of the revenues of the Empire. Silently, in this manner, amends began to be made to Hindu culture for the setback it had suffered when it was swamped by a mighty wave of far higher vitality; and the process of concilliating the Hindus was continued to a point where the defeated Hindus gathered up power into their own hands and their Muslim conquerors became virtually the vanquished. Since the days of Manu, Akbar was the second man to show favour to and foster one section of the population out of fear which the other section inspired him with. The result was that when the Pathans or Non-Mogul Muslims were weakened to a degree, the balance of power was upset: the Mogul Empire became a pathetic heap of ruins; and the country once more plunged into chaos.

Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb was the first Mogul Emperor to perceive this danger. He took the wheel in bold resolute hands and tried to wrench it round to a safe course. But the Hindus by this time had tasted power and they were not prepared to part with it so easily. Dangerous rebellions leapt into flame all round the Imperial Throne; and by and by the provinces, and the

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capital itself, were plundered, and a day came when the Mogul Empire was no more. It was through no fault of Akbar's policy that the Hindus failed to re-establish their rule on the ruins of this Empire ; the fault lay deep in themselves - in their own philosophy, their own culture—in short their own behaviour among themselves. This was the thing that had wrested the sceptre from their hands and this was the paralysis that prevented them from grasping it when fate put it in their reach again.

The British people came on this scene of general chaos, and of loose, divided and narrow loyalties. Naturally they turned the situation to their own good.

British Policy

This change of rulers, however, did not alter the rest of the situation at all. The Moguls perished because to weaken one potential enemy (the Muslims) they gave the other potential enemy (the Hindus) the chance of his life; and the British in India are marching blithely along the selfsame road. Like Akbar they thought that the danger to their empire could come only from Muslims; and the peril appeared to them to be all the more real because they had, in name, dispossessed the Muslims. The Hindus, on the other hand, must have appeared to the early builders of British India as a scattered, disunited force which, in reason, could not constitute any serious danger. The cardinal point of British policy in India, therefore, was to hold back the Muslims and to bring forward the Hindus. This second doze of the policy of political counterpoise practically broke the backbone of Muslims in India. In numbers they were already a minority, and henceforward they began to be pushed back in every walk of life and in all the avenues of lucrative career whether in government service or in commerce and industry. The Hindus, on the other hand, forged ahead and gathered slowly all the power in their hands, until it came to the time of Lord Curzon who was the Aurangzeb of British rule in India.

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But in the end his policy too led to the same result as did the policy adopted by Aurangzeb. His successors had to bow before the storm and conciliation of powerful Hindu interests has continued to be the keynote of British policy, culminating in the annulment of the partition of Bengal. Then, and since, the Hindus, by making use of the weapon ever ready to their hand, *i.e.* the weapon of commercial and social boycott—have demonstrated time and again that the real power in *Bharat Mata* belongs to them.

We see thus that from the commencement of Mogul rule in India the policy of counterpoise has continually worked to the advantage of Hinduism and to the detriment of Islam. Having reaped the full benefit of this policy, which now they call the policy of "divide and rule," if the Hindus turn round upon the poor Muslims and accuse them of treachery to Mother India for playing into the hands of the foreign rulers, their queer logic will not deceive those who know something of Indian history and of the way they themselves originated this policy against the aboriginal tribes of India and then went on benefiting by it when the Moguls and the British copied them (though not in full style).

Now the wheel has gone full circle once more and an opportunity, similar to the one Hinduism missed when the Mogul Empire collapsed, stands at the threshold. Should India fail a second time the blame, as before, would lie at the door of the Hindu religion and Hindu culture.

A Request

With regard to the years that lie ahead Hindu leaders would do well to bear one thing very clearly in mind. In the modern world of critical values it is impossible to revive either the Hindu religion or Hindu Culture. Besides, it is not only impossible but harmful as well. The influence of Islamic religious principles and of European ideas of political freedom and

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personal rights has gone too deep now to be obliterated. Man would never again accept the laws of Manu; and should an attempt be made to impose them upon him, the effort would end in disaster. In case the matter comes to the hard test of a real trial, Hindu leaders should not delude themselves with the idea that the Muslims are a minority. For, in this vital struggle, all those elements in the country's population to whom in the fold of Hinduism all avenues of progress have been closed for centuries would snap their age-old fetters and rally round Islam. They would join this Faith in countless numbers. In crucial moments the human eye learns to penetrate far beyond the present; and face to face with such a crisis the Indian masses would at last begin to perceive that some social systems have it in them only to destroy, working silently under cover: that they can never *build*. Hinduism has a terrible power for destruction, as history has shown again and again; but on the construction side it has little or nothing to show at all. In pre-Islamic Indian history the hay-day of Bharatvarsh was the Buddhist era, but Hinduism shattered this great power to smithereens so that now there is no Buddhist left in India. However, having won this opportunity Hinduism immediately proceeded to fritter it away in the petty squabbles of the old division into castes. It failed to produce any just, progressive and enduring form of social order. The country split into local and sectional centres so constituted as to be mutually exclusive and incompatible. When Islam came to India it had its day, but suffered the same fate at the hand of the disruptive forces embodied in Hinduism; yet Hinduism again failed to learn the lesson and chaos spread in the land once more. When the British came on the scene there was hardly any need for them to stretch out their hands. The ripe golden fruit fell into their lap of itself because, as it was, it couldn't have stayed on the stalk any longer. The British gave stability to the country and the torn masses at last had a chance to breath in peace again.

And now another rare chance is knocking at the gates of India only if Hinduism would rise to the

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occasion and broaden its outlook. In Islam all social and political principles and all its religious tenets operate in absolute harmony with the natural unspoilt tendencies and aspirations of the human soul: Islamic Brotherhood gives equal opportunity to all. Should Hindu India pour this Islamic soul into its body of native intelligence, the future would be one of unrivalled greatness. Otherwise, evidently, the old story would repeat itself to the same end.

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NUMBER OF THE VEDAS AND THEIR RECEIVERS

There is considerable difference of opinion in respect to the number of the Vedas. In some places the word "Ved" occurs as a singular noun, in which case it means "knowledge." In *Panini's Ashtadhiyae* (a book of eight chapters) this word is to be met with in 6 : 1 : 160 and 6 : 1 : 201. In the first case the *udat* (accent) is on the first syllable, while in the second the accent is on the last syllable. In the first instance it means "a collection of books." It represents what in terms of Sanskrit Grammar is known as *yagik* and *yagrudha* (a word retaining the original root meaning but in usage settling down to denote only one aspect of that meaning to the exclusion of others). When the accent is on the last syllable it means a kind of brush made of *kush* (a kind of grass) that was used to remove any ashes left on *prodash* (a kind of cake.) This word is found in *Caushitaki-Brahman* and other writings. In E. B. Cowell's translation of *Caushitaki-Brahman* we have the following sentence. "Having handed the bunch of *kush* (grass) called *ved* she should mutter this mantara." Professor Julius Eggling in his translation of *Shat-pat Brahman* (Sacred-Books of the East) quotes the above passage to bring out the second meaning of the word "Ved."

Some sources say that the Veds are three in number and use the word *trayi* (three as one) with them (*Amarkosh* ; *Aitare-Brahman* 25 : 7 and Manu Smriti 1 : 23) ; while other authorities say that they are four. (Mundko-Upnishad of Atherv Ved 1 : 1 : 4-5 and Gopat Brahman 1 : 2 : 17).

Thus we get the following opinions : (1) one Ved ; (2) three Veds ; (3) four Veds ; and there are some who incline to the view that this number exceeds four. In *Chhandog-upnishad* history and mythology are spoken of as the fifth Ved and this opinion is found in some other places as well. The basis of this difference

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is that the first school regards the entire collection as one complete whole; the second school divides it into three parts on the basis of the three styles in which it is written, *i.e.*, *rik* (poetry), *yaju* (prose), and *sam* (songs); and those who say that the Veds are four in number argue that the primary collection of knowledge was put into four divisions, and these divisions were made on the basis of the division of energies. For instance *agni* represented thermic energy; *wayu* represented dynamic energy; *sam* represented optic (after adit, *i.e.*, sun) energy; and *angira* represented organic energy. (*Mahabhashya-Paspeshanik*).

The names of the receivers (rishis) of the Vedas are given as *Agni*, *Wayu*, *Adit* and *Angira*. But it must be remembered that these names are what is called *Awnarth Sanjna*: they are not proper names like Richard or John, etc. *Awnarth Sanjna* is a name which carries in itself the basis and history of that name. Some instances of names of this kind in the classics are *Idhamva* (carrier of faggots) in *Kadambri* by Ban-Bhatt who was poet-laureate of king Harshvardhan of Kannauj (old Capital Thaneshawar, date 605 A.D. to 641, which coincides with Persia's earliest contact with Islam); *Vishala* (more glorious) in *Meghduta* by Kalidas; and *Kaushambi* in *Katha Sarit-Sagar* by Som Dev Bhatt. As modern parables of the ancient *Awnarth Sanjna* we have such names as X-Ray, glauber salt, etc.

Other words derived from the same root as Ved are *Vedas*, neuter gender, means wealth, glory, wisdom; *Vedi*, feminine gender, means divine law, circumference, altar; *Vedi*, masculine gender, perceiver, knower, scholar of the Vedas. Feminine for this is *Vedni* which means pure reason, intellect; *Vedana*, means perception, experience; *Vedana*, feminine gender, means feeling, sensation; *Vedana*, neuter gender, means cognition; *vedak* masculine gender, means proof, soul, oversoul; *vidya*, common gender, means impirical world, God, entities.

To give some details of the views mentioned above, in *Mahabharat* and a number of the *Puranas*

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there are various opinions in regard to the number of the Vedas. According to *Mahabharat*, *Krishn Dwaipayan*, in view of the ritual it was meant to serve, divided the Ved into parts : *Rik*, *Yaju*, *Sam* and *Atharv*. In Bhagvat Puran (1 *skand* 4 adhayae) too we come across the same opinion. In the *adiparvi* (first chapter) of Mahabharat it is written that Krishn Dwaipayan came to be known as *Ved Veyas* because he divided the Ved into four parts. *Ved Veyas* literally means "divider of the Ved." This Ved Veyas is the same Veyasji who is believed to be the author of Mahabharat and the Puranas. His original name was Krishn Dwaipayan, but he came to be known as Ved Veyas because of his arrangement of the sacred book into four parts.

Ved Veyas imparted the Ved to four disciples, and this fact is taken as one basis for the view that he divided the Ved into four parts. In Bhagvat Puran (1 skand 4 adhayae) it is stated that one of the disciples was *Pail* and the portion which Ved Veyas taught to Pail came to be called the *Rig Ved*. Another disciple was Jaimini and the portion entrusted to him was called the *Sam Ved*. The third disciple was *Vishampayan* who received the portion now known as the *Yajur Ved*; and the fourth disciple (Sumantu) got the portion we call *Atharvangiras* or the *Atharv Ved*.

These disciples handed on to their disciples what they had received from Ved Veyas, and they in turn handed it on to the next generation, the method of teaching having been different in the case of each. That is said to be the reason why so many shakhas (recensions or branches) came into existence.

In Bhagvat Puran (12 *skand* 6 *adhayae*) there is given a list of this long line of disciples, and a similar list is also found in *Brahmand Puran* which carries some historical notes as well on these names. An altogether different list is given in *Shat-pat Brahman*.

From the Vedas themselves some knowledge can be gained as to the number of their receivers and their

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giver. In the Rig Ved, in what is also called the *sukt* of *jan* (knowledge), a history of the revelation of the Vedas is given. (Rig Ved 10 *mandal*, 70 *sukt*). In the third *Mantar* of the same *sukt* it is written that *yajna* gave the Vedas. In a sukt of the Yajur Veda, 31 *adhayae*, which is also known as the *purush* Adhayae, it is stated that Yajna-Purush (that which sleeps in the *Sansar*, *i.e.*, Universe) gave to (1) *Richha*, (2) *Samani*, (3) Chhandasi and (4) to Yaju.

In *Mundak-Upnishad* it is stated that Brahma got the Ved in the first instance and taught it to his son *Atharv*, who taught it to *Angira*, who taught it to *Satyavaha Bharadwaj*, and so on.

In the *Brahmans* we come across two opinions, one of which is that the Ved first came to a *rishi* called *Ajprishni*; and the other view is that *Agni Wayu*, *Adit* and *Angira* got one Ved each. Agni got the Rig Ved, Wayu got the Yajar Ved, Adit got the Sam Ved and Angira got the Atharv Ved. *Manu Smriti* also contains the same view except that in it there is no mention of Angira.

According to *Shvetashvatar Upnishad*, *Rudr* created *Hirangarbha* and gave the Ved to him. In the same Upnishad in another place the Ved is mentioned as having been given to Brahma. On this ground Sanskrit dictionaries like *Amarkosh* have taken Hirangarbha and Brahma to be synonyms. The third view contained in the same Upnishad is that the Ved was first given to *Kapil*.

In Ishwar Krishan's *viyakhya* (exposition) of *Sankhya Karik* a (translated into Chinese in A.D. 400 and referred to in many Chinese works) *Kapil* is said to be the *Adi Vidwan* (first wise man) to whom the Ved was given. (*Vachspati mishr*, in his commentary, is of the same opinion. With regard to this Kapil two things are to be gleaned from history: (1) It was the proper name of some person; (2) in Bhagwat Gita Krishn calls himself Kapil among the *sidhs* (the successful ones). In a book entitled *Vishnu Sahasar-*

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nam Kapil is mentioned as one of the names of Krishn.

The word "Kapil," derived from *kapish*, literally means brown.[1] The word *kapi*, from the same root, means "monkey." Kapil would thus mean "of the colour of a monkey," *i.e.*, brown.

The birth-place of Buddha was *Kapilwathu* which was situated in the *terai* of the Himalayas in what we now call the United Provinces. This word of Pali language Professor Rhys-Davids transforms into the Sanskrit *Kapilwastu*. The teaching of Buddha resembles the ancient teaching of Kapil in many respects. In Bhagwat, the conversation between Kapil and *Dev Huti* is in many respects the same in effect as the contents of *Jatik Mala* (birth-stories of Buddha). In the Buddhism which spread over China and Japan there was a lining of the teaching of Kapil. That is the reason why authoritative works on the Sankh Philosophy of Kapil like Sankh Karika by Ishwar Krishan found their way into China; and it is still more interesting to note that an ancient treatise on Sankh philosophy came to light in India later than it did in China.

Just as in the above the Ved is mentioned as having been given to *Adi Vidwan*, similarly in Bhagwat Puran it is said that *Parm Sat* gave the Ved to Adi Kavi (first poet).

Manikar says that the Ved is the word of *Bhagwan*, who took incarnation in the form of fish.

In the appendix of *Nirukt*, by Yaska Achari, the creation of Ved is believed to have taken place from the sun, and that the *utpatti* (illumination) of *Agni* and *Wayu* took place after that.

According to *Chandogyo Upnishad* and *Aitrey Brahman* Agni, Wayu, Adit and Angira are not *Chaitan-Dev* (personified gods) but *Adishthatri-Dev*

1. The sense here seems to be the same as in the case of "Adam" as used in the Holy Quran. See *Primitive Man's Religion and his Conception of God* in *The Review of Religions*, April, 1940.

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(ruling gods); and the Utpatti of the Vedas took place through them.

Yaska Achari is also of opinion that the three names (Agni, Wayu, Adit) are applied in view of *Karam Bhed* (difference of function).

The *Kal Sukt* (hymn of time) of the Atharv Ved speaks of the Ved as taking *utpatti* from *Kal*. This word "Kal" occurs in many places as a synonym of Brahma, while astronomers understand it to mean "time." In this aspect of its meaning one can catch a fleeting glimpse of the theory of evolution profounded by philosophers such as Adam Smith, Hume and Hobbs in connection with the development of human speech.

In *Gopat Brahman* Agni, Wayu and Angira are given one Ved each respectively in view of their functions. W. D. Whiteney is of the opinion that Gopat Brahman is a Brahman of the Atharv Ved, and *Mundko Upnishad* too relates to their same Ved. Apart from this, the name Atharv Ved is not mentioned definitely anywhere, from which circumstance it is to be deduced that this Ved is not so old.

In the commemoration volume of Sir Ram Krishan Gopal Bhandarkar, Pandit Bal Gangadhar Tilak wrote an article entitled "The Chaldean Vedas." In this article he embodied a good deal of material to show that cuniform inscriptions and inscriptions brought to light by Professor M. Lenarment bore out that the Chaldean culture deeply influenced the language and content of the Atharv Ved. For instance "*taboo*" in Chaldean meant a sort of magic and "*tabuam*" occurred in the Atharv Ved in the same meaning. The life and deeds of the Chaldean God *Bel-marduk* greatly influenced the Vedic idea of *Mardit* or *Indr*. A similar influence could be traced in stories as well. For instance in the Atharv Ved the word *apsu* occurred in a long story, while in the Chaldean language there was a word which was written *zu-ap* but pronounced *up zu*; and the long story in the Atharv Ved in connection with *apsu* and *apsujit*, in termi-

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nology and content, closely resembled a similar story in Chaldean. Thus, Tilak's view seems to lend further weight to Professor Whiteney's opinion.

In Mahabharat we have a story that the Vedas represent the devotional privations of and the exchange of views in assembly between 88,000 ascetic rishis and 50,000 rishis who had married and lived as householders.

In his *Raghu Vansh* Kalidas calls the rishis *mantra-krit* (maker of mantras). This word occurs in the *Surg* (canto) of Raghu Vansh where a son of *Kutsa* (a disciple of *Wartantu*) presents himself before Raja Raghu to request 14 crore coins of the realm. The Raja questioned him regarding his master in which connection there occurs the expression: "One who attained to the summit among those rishis who made the mantr." This shows that Kalidas believed the Vedas to have been made by rishis, and should we decide to accept Kalidas' view as representing the opinion of his age we can say that Raja Raghu (great-grandfather of Ram Chandra) believed that the Vedas were the composition of Rishis. Anyway, that was the opinion of Kalidas.

Moreover, the most authoritative treatise of Sanskrit grammar of ancient times is the one by Panini, known as *Ashtadhyae*. Dr. Goldstricker, in his *Panini and his Date*, etc., has given his opinion as to the time of Panini and the place where he lived. It appears that Panini studied in the University at *Taxila* (in Rawalpindi district, now known as *Shahji ki-dheri*) and his period, roughly speaking was between 500 and 400 B.C. In Panini's *Ashtadhyae*, in *adhyae* 3, *pad* 2, we have the following:—"*Sukaram-pap-punya-mantrishu krink.*" Among words accepted by the treatise as grammatically correct according to the rule embodied in this *sutr* one is *Mantra-krit*, which means "one who composes mantras."

When we put these two views together, that of Kalidas and Panini, we get the conclusion that the idea prevailing about 400 B.C. was the same as in the time

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of *Raghuvansh* which is about 600 A.D.

In *Aitreya Brahman* (authors name *Mahidas*, who named his composition after his mother), there is a story in the course of which it is mentioned that *Indr* was the giver of the Vedas and *Bhardwaj* received that teaching.

This *Indr* is mentioned in various places. In *Tandya Maha-Brahman* (18 : 1 : 92) *Parjapati* (literally protector of the masses or children) had two kinds of sons: Devs and Asurs. In *Shat-pat Brahman* both kinds are mentioned and there is a reference to a battle which occurred between the two parties, which battle this *Brahman* is disposed to interpret as a metaphor. In his translation Professor Eggling too takes it as a mataphor for he writes:—"Illusion is what they say concerning the battle." In any case *Indr* is spoken of as having destroyed the following *Asurs*: (1) *Shambar*, (2) *Britra* (3) *Namuchi*, (4) *Bal*, (5) *Ahi*, (6) *Rauhin*, (7) *Danu*, (8) *Gotra*, etc.

Some European and American scholars hold the view that these *Asurs* are the Assyrians: that Bal stands for the Babylonians, and Panik for Phœnecians. Indr's struggle they interpret as a struggle between the wheat-coloured (Nordic) race and some darker peoples.

It is not without interest to note here that in ancient Vedic literature the word *Asur* carries a very good meaning. This *Asur* is the same as *Varn* (Gr. Uranus). *Varn* literally means "one that covers all," from which sense it gathers the meaning "Lord of Justice." Asur is one of the epithets of Varn. Taken as a compound word it is *Asu* + *R* (life + to give), *i.e.*, "life-giver." But by and by the word acquired a bad sense in Sanskrit literature. It came to be treated as being a compound of *a* for negation, *su* meaning good or right, and *R* meaning to enjoy. Thus it came to imply moral degradation and backwardness. Another derivation is *Asu*=*pran*, *i.e.*, life, and *R* to enjoy; in which case the word means "those who give themselves up to the enjoyment of this life in disregard of

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the life to come. In this sense *Asur* and *daitya* (demons) become practically synonyms.

In short, the Vedas would seem to indicate that at some time in the remote ages a struggle took place between the Persian, Assyrian and Babylonian cultures on one side and Vedic culture on the other. But a fuller discussion of this question would not be appropriate here.

In the Rig Ved *dash rajna yudh* (a battle of ten rajas) is mentioned which is taken as a battle between rulers of the Punjab, Persia and Russian Turkistan.—*Sudas* and Devdas (or Sudas, son of Devdas) on one side, and some tribes on the other the names of which are given as *Anu*, *Yadu*[1], *Drohyu*, *Puru*, and *Turwash*. These tribes, according to Dr. George Grierson and Dr. Hoernley were the ancestors of the present border tribes. These two scholars say that the *Pakth* of the Rig Ved are the Pathans of to-day; and the *Bhalanas* were people who gave their name to the Bolan Pass. The Shiva of the Rig Ved were connected with Sibi near Quetta. Similarly people have connected the Vedic *Prithu* and Parthiv with the Parthians; *Panik* with the Phoenician; and *Balhik* with Balkh. *Uttar Kuru* which we come across many times in the *Brahmans* is said to be connected with Ptolemy's *ottar kore*.

Evidently, then, along with geographical names the Vedas also contain the names of a number of tribes connected with those places. This circumstance constitutes strong proof of the fact that the Vedas, since they first came into being through the *rishis*, have often been interfered with. Practically all the Punjab rivers are mentioned and some of the rivers of the United Provinces, but no geographical feature of the land beyond that province or of Southern India appears anywhere. This shows that during the Vedic period the Aryans did not penetrate any further towards the east, and hardly at all towards the south.

1. It should be noted that this Yadu is the same people among whom, later on, Krishn of the Mahabharat was born.

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All these factors give unqualified support to the view held by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement of Qadian. Hazrat Ahmad held that the Vedas were to be included among Revealed Books, but that thier text had been interfered with and corrupted at various periods from time to time, so that it was practically impossible now to distinguish the original portion from the later interpolations.

That the Vedas are Revealed Books is borne out by the simple fact that prophecies contained in them are finding fulfilment before our own eyes to-day. For instance in the Rig Ved and the Atharv Ved the advent of a teacher named Ahmad is mentioned and it is written that he would appear in *Kudun* (Qadian). The miraculous way in which this ancient prophecy has come true before our own eyes is a marvel of the present era.

It should be remembered that this prophecy is contained not only in the Vedas: Rishis who pondered over the Vedas, while discussing the future religion of mankind, have called *Ahmad ki jai*. For instance take the case of *Shauva-udgith* in the Chhandogya Upnishad and in some other books. The expression means: *ud*, Supreme; *gith*, voice or teaching. Commentators explain *Shava* in a curious way. They take to it mean "dog"; and *Shauva-udgith* means that supreme voice or teaching which the rishis obtained when they were in dog form. On the face of it, this meaning of Shauva does not make any sense. A far better meaning to be applied here is "to morrow"—a sense in which the word is found used in *Bhatti Kaviah* (work of Bhartari Hari) and in Sidhant-Kanmudi, page 34, Nirnay-sagar Press, Bombay 1908. *Shauva-udgith*, thus, would mean the voice or teaching to come in the future." In this gith the expression "*Ahmat Nada*" is repeated three times, which plainly means "the Nad of Ahmad." *Nad* is a common word in Sanskrit and Hindi which means "voice", "proclamation" or "cry of victory". In this gith Ahmad's teaching is spoken of as being *Sam* which means

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"peace", "peaceful", "equality", "tranquility", and "smoothness." Evidently, then, this is a clear prophecy about the advent of an Ahmad whose teaching would become the basis of peace, equality, tranquillity and smoothness in human relations.

This prophecy is contained in the Brahmans as well which, too, by the orthodox Hindus are regarded as Revealed Books, as is shown by *rishi Katyayan*. The Brahmans lay great emphasis on the super excellence of the teaching of Ahmad, and this emphasis, as facts now before us have shown, was fully justified. Those who have given thought to this teaching have no hesitation to say that the New Order which we all long for can only be founded or the basis of this teaching. The universal anthem sung by the audience as a closing ceremony of the Conference of *World's Fellowship of Faiths*, 1935,[1] comprises no more than a synopsis of the famous lecture of the Promised Messiah known as *The Message of Peace*.

When we find, therefore, that an event foretold by the Vedas thousands of years ago has actually come to pass in our own day,[2] we can not but conclude that this collection originally embodied a Revealed Book. On the other hand, as the Vedas stand at present, they contain ample evidence that they have suffered enormously from interference at human hands:

1. Among the Vedas there is one called the *Yajur Ved*, which is understood to be of two Kinds: *Krishn* or black and *Shukla* or white. In the *Puranas*, there is a curious story as to how this Ved

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1. *World's Fellowship of Faiths* (1935), edited by Charles Frederick Weller.

2. "I consider it necessary to proclaim about my claim that it is not self-assumed on my part, but That God's own choice has raised me to this position..... P. 1.

The World of to-day was thirsty for spiritual rain, and this has been provided in my person". P. 3

"I do not say this of my own accord, but the mighty God, who is the Lord of earth and heavens, has revealed to me. He has told me not on one occasion but repeatedly, that I am Krishna for the Hindus and the Promised Messiah for the Muslims and the Christians." P. 151.

——*Ahmad*.

The Promised World Teacher. His claims and Teachings in his own Words. (6th Edition) Secunderabad—Dn.

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came into existence—a story which, in his preface, has also been recorded by Mahi Dhar, a famous commentator of the *Shukla Yajur Ved*, who lived in the time of Aurangzeb, and who wrote his commentaries in Benares—as is clearly borne out by a manuscript in Saraswati Bhawan Government Library, Benares. The story as given in *Vishun Puran* is to the effect that a Rishi, named *Vaishampayan* was the originator (or first receiver) of this Ved, who taught it to his disciple named *Yajvalkya*. One day the Rishi became angry with his disciple and ordered him to disgorge the Ved he had learnt. When *Yajvalkya* did so, other disciples of the Rishi transformed themselves into partridges and among them hastily picked up every bit of it. That was how this Ved came to be known as *Taittiriy Sanghita*. Taittiriy stands for *tittiri* which is the Sanskrit word for partiridge. On being disgorged it changed colour, giving rise to the name *Krishn Ved*.

Sayin Achari, who is a famous commentator of four Vedas, has written a commentary on the *Krishn Yajur Ved* as well—a fact which indicates that in his estimation it is more important than the Shukla of which he has written no commentary. Mahi Dhar, on the other hand, has written a commentary on the *Shukla Yajur Ved*. Mahi Dhar says that it was made by *Yajvalkya*, son of *Vajsaneyi*. In Shat-pat Brahman this same view has been expressed more than once. Mahi Dhar also says that the Ved originally was one and was divided into parts by *Ved Veyas*. *Bhatt Bhaskar Misher* (a commentator of *Taittiriy Sanghita*) too is of the same opinion. These facts throw the authenticity of one whole Ved open to the gravest doubts. How are we to know which is the authentic *Yajur Ved*? and herein lies conclusive proof that the Vedas have suffered from human interference.

Some Hindu scholars have tried to overcome this difficulty by saying that according to *Panini*, *tittiri* also meant " Rishi ". On this basis they take the word as a technical expression and interpret it to mean " mixed with commentary ". *Shukla* they interpret as pure

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i.e., unmixed with commentary. But whatever the truth of the matter, the fact that *Sayin Achari* has treated the *Krishan Yajur Ved* too as a Ved exposes the "mixed with commentary view" to grave doubt.

2. *Yasak Achari* in *Nirukt* has written that in the beginning Rishis helped each other in scholastic pursuits and also taught their children and disciples with the greatest care. But later on people became negligent in the matter and books such as this *Nighantu* and *Ved* and *Vedang* (limbs of the Ved) came into existence. In other words *Yasik Achari* held that the Vedas came into existence only gradually.

3. In *Vayu Puran* (*adhyae* 56) a long list is given in the form of a geneological tree of the Rishis who made the Vedas, and it is stated that the Vedas came into existence slowly in the course of many *yugs*. This yug is not the yug of Hindu astronomy which extends to 3,60,20,000 years. As indicated in Shatpat Brahman (*kand* 13, *adhyae* 3), it means a period of four years. The calendar in those times had two years: one the ordinary solar year which contained 360 days, and the other year counted in relation to the ritualistic functions. The year of 360 days left unaccounted a period equivalent to 5¼ days, *i.e.*, 21 days in four years. Once in every four years this error was corrected; and on this occasion *Aswa Medha Yajna* (horse sacrificer) was performed, when new *mantras* were brought into use. This period of four years was called a *yug*.

4. Besides, the Vedas themselves contain evidence as to how and when later hymns were added to them:

(*a*) *Devapi* and *Shantanu* were two brothers, [This Santanu, it may be noticed, is according to Yasik, Kaurav Shantanu, the father or grandfather of the *Bhisham* who was the *Sainapati* (field martial) on the side of the *Kurus* in the war between them and the *Pandus* described in the Mahabharat, and from whose brother sprang the two Houses of the *Kurus* and the *Pandus*]. A brief history of these two brothers is to be

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gleaned from the Vedas and *Yasik Achari*, in *Nirukt* (2 : 10-11) has quoted definite *mantras* to this effect. It may be mentioned here by the way that the fact that *Shantanu* is mentioned in the Ved, combined with the fact that in the Rig Ved (Mandal 10) there is a hymn of which the Rishi is Krishn, shows that Krishn lived much earlier than Ram Chander [1]. For Ram Chander is not mentioned anywhere in the Vedas at all [2]. True, that the word *Sita* occurs in some *Mantras*, but these are known as *Krishi* (agriculture) hymns and all authorities are unanimous that it means a "plough furrow" and has nothing to do with Sita, the spouse of Ram Chandra.

(*b*) According to sukt 1, Mandal 1 of the Rig Ved Rishis are of two kinds: Purva (ancient) and *nutan* (modern). This sukt goes on to say that the ancient and modern Rishis were both devotees of *agni*, this is virtually a definite statement that the hymns were composed both by earlier and later people.

A similar conclusion flows from (among others) the following texts as well of the Rig Ved:

1 Mandal, 12 Sukt, 12 Mantra ; 1 : 20 : 1 ; 1 : 38 : 14 ; 1 : 47 : 2 ; 1 : 63 : 9 ; 1 : 66 : 15 ; 1 : 84 : 5 ; 5 : 28 : 1 ; 7 : 22 : 2 ; 9 : 114 : 2 ; 10 : 80 : 7.

To sum up the discussion, the following conflicting views are deducible from Vedic literature :—

1. Brahma was the original receiver of the Vedic Revelation.

2. Kapil (one name of Krishn) was the original receiver of the Vedic Revelation.

3. This Revelation came to three Rishis.

4. This Revelation came to four Rishis.

5. Originally the Ved was one but it was divided into parts by *Veyas*.

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1. We shall deal with this question fully in some future article.
2. In the Rig Ved 10 : 96 : 14 Ram is mentioned but it is not at all clear who this Ram is. See A. A. McDonald's Vedic Index and C. V. Vaidya's *History of Sanskrit Literature* (Vedic Period).

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6. Matter has been added to the original book from *yug* to *yug*.

7. During the Vedic period the Aryas had not gone any further to the east than the territory now known as the Muzaffarpur and Champaran Districts, nor had they penetrated towards the south.

8. The Rishis who made the Mantras, or received them, covered a wide area from Lake Balkash to the Gaghar River in Ambala District, Yajvalkya being the only one who lived in Mathila (Modern Darbhunga in Behar).

All these conclusions bear out that the Promised Messiah's estimate to which we have already referred, is quite true and correct.

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LETTER TO A FRIEND[1]

MY DEAR FRIEND

Many thanks for your letter of the 14th instant. I feel that there is much that is common between us and it is right, whoever has said it, that birds of the same feather flock together.

I indeed welcome the work undertaken by the Oxford Group. We must have a common platform where followers of the various religions can meet together. It is inside such communities that we will be better able to understand each other.

I strongly feel however that a world spiritual revolution which found its inception at Qadian will dominate the world and that after these tribulations which are shaking the world man's eyes will be at last opened and he will eventually return to his Great Maker, lowly and humbly. I see it; I feel it in my heart. It is bound to come.

As was foretold by the Prophets of Israel, the Promised Messiah came in the fulness of time and appeared from the East, at Qadian. Blessed are those who reject him not in their eagerness. He it was whose advent was foretold by Daniel in his last verses and who came 1290 days (years) after the daily sacrifice was abolished at Mecca and it was cleared of idols by our Holy Prophet after its recapture. And blessed are those who are witnesses of the new light in the year 1335 as it was in this year that the present illustrious successor of the Promised Messiah visited England and delivered the holy message and laid in London the foundation of a mosque.

It is from this mosque that the 'Sun' will now shine over Europe and will dispel the clouds of

1. This letter was written by Khan Bahadur Dilawar Khan, Assistant Commissioner, Charsadda, to one of his friends, and for its reproduction in our pages we are indebted toKhan Bahadur Sahib who very kindly sent it to us for publication.

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darkness and willb ring the world to the one great God. This is bound to happen but it will take some time for its completion. God promised to the Promised Messiah that He will complete his mission in 300 years from the date of its beginning. But the world will witness one tribulation after another. God said to the Promised Messiah "I sent a warner to the world and the world accepted him not; but God has accepted him and shall manifest His truth by mighty attacks." This is so true. Look at the great earthquakes, the plague, the influenza, and the mighty wars and all this upheaval in the world! The Promised Messiah spoke of all these to us and, as has been always done by the children of Adam, he was spurned and rejected, but God has accepted him and shall manifest his truth by "mighty attacks."

I am one of those many who have been quickened to life after joining the fold of the Messiah. I am a witness to the great transformation in me after I embraced the Ahmadiyya Movement. Many of my humble prayers have been accepted and many coming events have been shown to me in my visions. This is not self-conceit. It is a humble acknowledgment of God's loving-kindness. I have still in me several weaknesses and I am far from complete. In the Ahmadiyya Community there are many who hear the Sweet Voice of God as we hear that of each other.

If in this letter you find something which might be unpalatable, you will, I hope, please forgive me. "Out of the abundance of heart the mouth speaketh." I have been given life by the Master, my beloved Master, the Promised Messiah, and I am occasionally tempted by the great things that I have witnessed to invite others to his spiritual fold.

Blessed are those who are humble and meek of heart and persistently pray for Divine Guidance; for truly, it is they who shall find it.

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